

MANGEL WURTZEL.

R E P O R T

OF

THE COMMITTEE

OF THE

DONCASTER AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION

ON THE ADVANTAGES OF

MANGEL WURTZEL

AS A FALLOW CROP.

FOUNDED ON

RETURNS RECEIVED IN ANSWER TO THE QUERIES ISSUED
BY THE COMMITTEE.

THIRD EDITION.

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P R E F A C E.

At the annual meeting of the Doncaster Agricultural Association in 1828, a resolution was passed, that it was desirable to extend the inquiries of the Association to other subjects of general interest besides Cattle, and a Committee was appointed to make inquiries and report the result of them on the use and advantages of Bones as a Manure.

The Committee at their first meeting prepared a list of queries to be submitted to the farmers, with a view of eliciting the necessary information.

They also laid out into districts the extent of country over which their inquiries were to run, and these districts were allotted among the members of the Committee; each member undertook to send the inquiries, and as far as possible procure returns from the farmers within the district, and was considered at liberty to extend them as much further as he pleased. The reference to the district will give an idea of the method and extent; it was as follows:—

LORD VISC. ALTHORP. . Wiseton, Everton, Mathersea, Misson, Grinley, Clayworth.

HON. J. B. SIMPSON . Babworth, Retford, Blyth, Grove, and the Forest.

HON. W. DUNCOMBE, M.P. Marr, Brodsworth, Hooton Pagnell, Hickleton, Clayton, Thurnscoe, Darfield.

SIR W. B. COOKE, Bart. Bentley, Adwick, Burghwallis, Campsall, Ows頓, Armthorpe.

C. WOOD, Esq. M.P. . . Hemsworth, Ackworth, Badsworth, Kirby, Elmsall, Brierly, Felkirk, Hindley, Crofton.

W. B. WRIGHTSON, Esq. Sprotbrough, Melton, Barnborough, Loversall, Mexborough, Conisbrough, Edington, Warmsworth, Wadsworth,

F. O. EDMUNDS, Esq. . . Worsbrough, Heyland, Wentworth, Hemingfield, Wath.

S. C. HILTON, Esq. . . Rossington, Tickhill, Finingley, Austerfield.

HY. PILKINGTON, Esq. . . Park Lane, Hatfield, Thorne.

GEO. MARTIN, Esq. . . Sandall, Barnby Dun, Kirk Bramwith, Fishlake.

TH. SHORT, Esq. . . . Bawtry, Scrooby, Haworth.

JNO. FULLERTON, Esq. . . Thrybergh, Rawmarsh,
Hooton Roberts,
Braithwell, Maltby.

J. W. CHILDERS, Esq. . . Cantley, Auckley, Blaxton, Wroot.

Honorary Secretary, ROBERT BAXTER, Esq.

The next subject fixed upon, was 'Mangel Wurtzel,' and the following Report is founded upon Returns received in answer to the Queries issued by the Committee.

Amongst our Correspondents are the following:—

1. ALTHORP, Lord Visc. . . . Wiseton Park, near Bawtry.
2. BIRKS, Mr. . . . Rossington Grange, near Doncaster.
3. BLOOMFIELD, Mr. . . . Warham, near Walsingham, Norfolk.
4. BLYTHE, Mr. . . . Norfolk.
5. BORN, Mr. . . . Streethorpe, near Doncaster.
6. BULLING, Mr.
7. CROSS, Mr. . . . Gringley, near Bawtry.
8. GIBBONS, Mr.
9. KELK, Mr. GEORGE Sutton, near Retford.

10. KITCHING, Mr. . . . Shooter's Hill, near Doncaster.
11. MOORE, Mr. . . . Warham, near Walsingham, Norfolk.
12. PALEY, Mr. . . . Squire Pastures, near Leeds.
13. PARK, Mr. KELSEY
14. RHODES, Mr. . . . Horsforth Hall, near Leeds.
15. SIMPSON, Hon. John Babworth, near Retford.
16. SNOWDEN, Mr. . . . Marr, near Doncaster.
17. WARWICK, Mr. . . . Eaton, near Retford.
18. WESTERN, C. C. Esq. M.P. Felix Hall, Essex.
19. WRIGHT, Rev. GODF. Bilham, near Doncaster.

R E P O R T.

THE subject which the Committee have selected for their Second Report, is one respecting a fallow crop of very recent introduction into this country, viz. Mangel Wurtzel; consequently, the answers to their queries are not so numerous as they could have desired, for the purpose of forming a correct judgment on the comparative value, in all respects, of Swedish Turnips and Mangel Wurtzel.

Amongst our Correspondents, some of the most valuable are from Norfolk, where two* appear to have grown Mangel Wurtzel for ten or twelve years. Of the others who have favoured us with their answers, seven or eight have used it for above five years: but the greatest part have only begun to use it within the last year or two. The answers are from every description of soil, the greatest number (nine) from sand,† not, it appears, because that kind of soil is most favourable to it, but because on sand land fallow crops, of all sorts, are more generally

* Bloomfield, Bulling.

† Birks, Blythe, Bloomfield, Bulling, Kelk, Moore, Kitching, Born, Lord Althorp.

grown than on any others : six are from peat,* four from clay,† four from chalk,‡ or limestone.

The method of sowing appears to be drilling, or dibbling on ridges, from 27 to 30 inches apart, and afterwards singling out the plants in the rows, at about 16 or 18 inches distant from each other ; the period of sowing, any time between the middle of April and end of May ; on cold soils, earlier than on warm.

The root is taken up in October or November, and stored, or piled, like potatoes, being covered with about one foot of straw, and afterwards with a few inches of mould ; but care must be taken not to lay the mould on till the plants are quite dry, as they would otherwise be liable to heat and rot. The tops and leaves should be ploughed into the land immediately. In comparing the quantity of manure used for Swedish Turnips and Mangel Wurtzel, it appears, from the answers of those farmers § who have tried Mangel Wurtzel longest, that both require nearly an equal quantity, or if anything, the proportion for Swedes is rather the largest, though, at the same time, some lay on more || for Mangel Wurtzel, especially if the Swedes are to be eat on the ground. The quantity may be stated as from 10 to

* Birks, Cross, Kelk, Park, Simpson, Warrick.

† Lord Althorp, Rhodes, Warwick, Cross.

‡ Blyth, Bloomfield, Snowden, Wright.

§ Simpson, Bulling, Bloomfield, Blythe.

|| Lord Althorp, Kelk, Kelsey Park, Birks.

12 three-horse cart-loads per acre. With respect to the comparative produce of the two crops, it appears to be in favour of Mangel Wurtzel, in the proportion of about one-fifth. The greatest weight obtained is by Mr. Simpson, of Babworth,—54 tons. Of our correspondents, ten decidedly prefer Mangel Wurtzel;* two give a partial preference to Swedes;† and the rest have not expressed any opinion.

With respect to the succeeding crop of corn, six‡ give it as their opinion that Mangel Wurtzel is detrimental, and two§ state the proportion of deficiency to be one-fifth; eight|| describe it as not injurious; and the rest have not made any statement on the subject.

The feeding properties of Mangel Wurtzel and Swedes are an important part of our investigation; Lord Althorp alone has fully tried their comparative merits: he writes thus,—“I tried an experiment, by feeding two oxen abundantly on Swedish Turnips and Mangel Wurtzel, and the result was, that they increased in weight, each of them, when upon Mangel Wurtzel, much more rapidly than when upon Swedish Turnips, in proportion to the weight which they consumed. I next year tried the same

* Lord Althorp, Blyth, Bulling, Cross, Gibbons, Paley, Park, Snowden, Western, Warwick.

† Born, Park.

‡ Cross, Gibbons, Kelk, Wright, Born, Moore.

§ Born, Cross.

|| Simpson, Warwick, Blyth, Bloomfield, Birks, Bulling, Western, Snowden.

sort of experiment on a single beast, and the result was similar, but rather more favourable to Mangel Wurtzel. I have heard that the giving large quantities of Mangel Wurtzel to beasts in very low condition has been found very dangerous; but I have never found any bad effects from the use of it with either cattle or sheep. It sometimes happens, that when the oxen are first put to Mangel Wurtzel, after coming from the pastures, it disagrees with one or two individuals; in this case, I cease giving it to these for a few days, and when put to it again, it has always agreed with them very well." In this opinion his Lordship is supported by Mr. Kelk, of Sutton; but seven* of our correspondents are of opinion that Swedish Turnips will feed quicker.

With respect to Milch Cows, the answers are few, and still more doubtful than on feeding; many of our correspondents state that they give it to their cows; five† of them speak of it as producing more, and sweeter milk; but two‡ of the Norfolk farmers say it is apt to injure the butter.

Having gone through all the points mentioned in the queries, the Committee consider that on the whole the answers are most satisfactory in favour of an increased culture of Mangel Wurtzel; for, in the first place, the Norfolk farmers, who have used it longest, and on soils where the Turnip is most

* Rhodes, Moore, Birks, Simpson, Gibbons, Cross, Park.

† Kitching, Rhodes, Birks, Simpson, Paley.

‡ Blythe, Bloomfield.

likely to compete with it, still grow it on so large a proportion as from one fourth* to one half † of their yearly fallows, and at the same time express an opinion that it is on stronger soil than theirs that it will be the most useful.

In giving their opinion in favour of Mangel Wurtzel, the Committee by no means lose sight of the value of other fallow crops; but considering that there must be in every farm some land not kind to turnips—that, with the same quantity of manure, a larger bulk of produce can be grown—and that for all land a change of fallow crop is desirable, they strongly recommend the introduction of it into every arable farm in the country.

To sum up—the advantages of Mangel Wurtzel are these:—

- It is more sure to plant—being very little liable to the fly, or grub.
- It will produce more weight.
- It is off the land earlier.
- It is useful as a change of fallow crop when the land is tired of Turnips.
- It will grow on land where Turnips cannot be raised.
- It is better Spring food.

On the other hand, in favour of Swedish Turnips, it may be said :

* Blythe.

† Bloomfield.

That the weeding and singling out are less expensive.

There is rather more time for fallowing in the spring.

The succeeding crop is better than after Mangel Wurtzel.

Perhaps cattle feed best on Swedish Turnips when they are used alone.

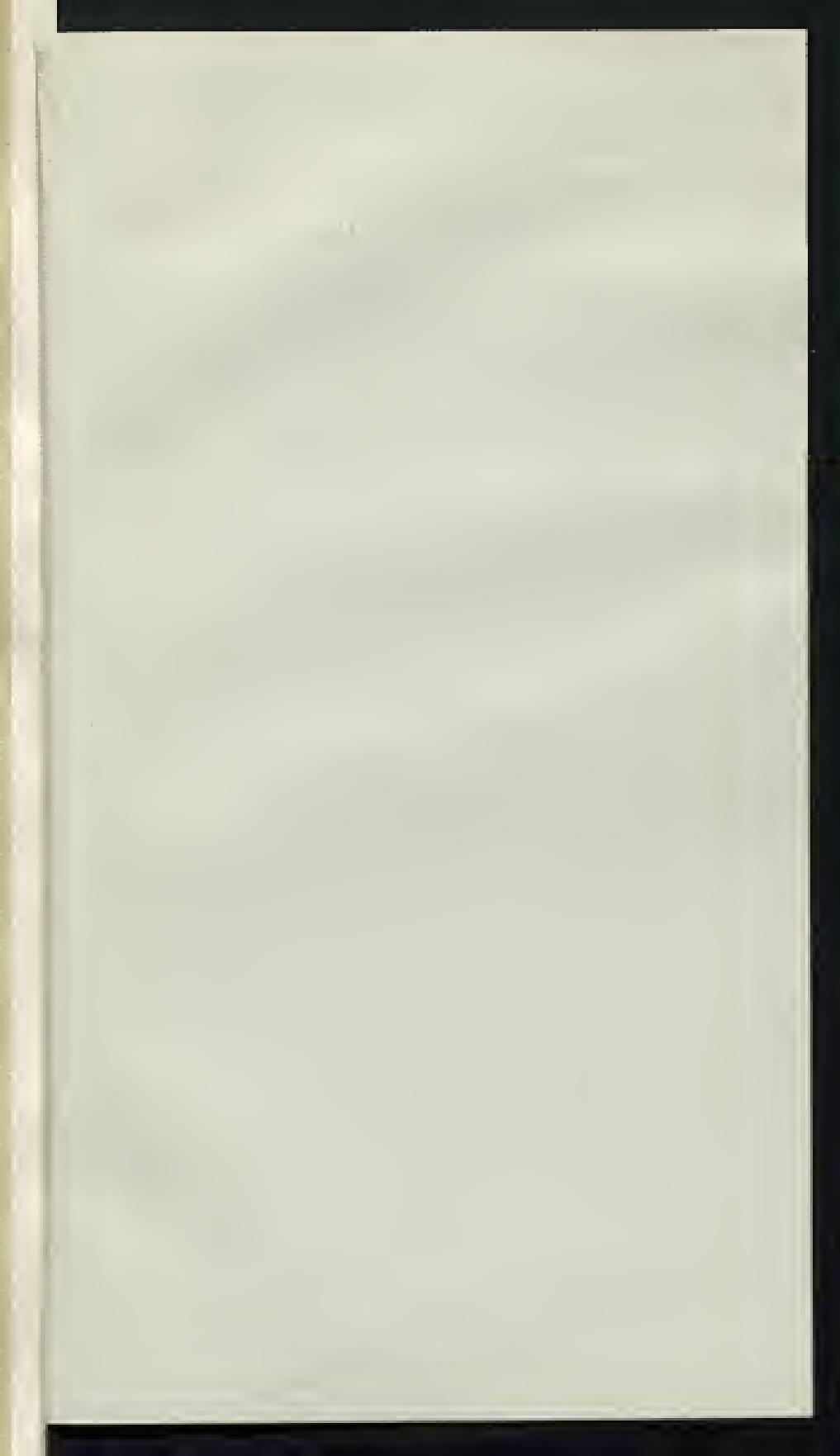
It must, however, be remarked, that these two last evidences in favour of Swedish Turnips are not fully proved, and only partially supported.

In conclusion, perhaps two observations may be of use.

First, That the very early season at which Mangel Wurtzel should be sown, renders it highly expedient that the land should be made as clean as possible in the autumn, so that a few days in the Spring may be sufficient to get it into a proper state for the reception of the seed.

Secondly, That wet seasons do not suit Mangel Wurtzel so well as dry ; and consequently for the last two years the Swedish Turnips have been the more valuable crop of the two.

THE END.



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